DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 364 017 EC 302 587

| | |
|---|---|
| AUTHOR | Davie, Ann R. |
| TITLE | Young Adults with Learning Disabilities and Other Special Needs: Guide for Selecting Postsecondary Transition Programs. [Update.] |
| INSTITUTION | American Council on Education, Washington, DC. HEATH Resource Center. |
| SPONS AGENCY | Department of Education, Washington, DC. |
| PUB DATE | 91 |
| CONTRACT | H030C00001-90A |
| NOTE | 13p.; For an earlier version, see ED 303 948. |
| PUB TYPE | Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055) -- Reference Materials - Bibliographies (131) -- Reference Materials - Directories/Catalogs (132) |
| EDRS PRICE | MF01/PC01 Plus Postage. |
| DESCRIPTORS | *College Preparation; Community Programs; Daily Living Skills; Educational Practices; Education Work Relationship; Employment Opportunities; Higher Education; Independent Living; *Learning Disabilities; Models; Needs Assessment; Postsecondary Education; Residential Programs; Selection; Skill Development; Student Characteristics; *Student Development; Student Evaluation; *Transitional Programs; Vocational Rehabilitation; Young Adults |

ABSTRACT

This resource paper provides information about postsecondary programs for young adults with substantial learning disabilities and other special needs. The introductory section gives the characteristics of the population and components of selected educational and training programs which seem to be successful. The resource guide then provides parents and professionals some guidelines for recognizing the young person's strengths and weaknesses, and recommendations for teaching them skills necessary to live more independently. Another section, addressed to the young adult, can serve as a worksheet for discussion with parents or other advisers on preparing for independence. A section on programs and resources describes about 35 campus-related programs, transitional residential programs, and vocational rehabilitation centers. A few programs with local appeal are described to encourage the development of such programs elsewhere. Final sections list 4 employment information sources and 13 selected publications. (JDD)

**********
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
**********

HEATH Resource Center
a program of
American Council on Education

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

ED 364 017

# YOUNG ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES AND OTHER SPECIAL NEEDS:

## Guide for Selecting Postsecondary Transition Programs

This resource paper provides information about postsecondary programs for young adults with substantial learning disabilities and other special needs. The paper has been written in response to inquiries to HEATH from professionals and parents. On the basis of their descriptions of these young adults, the introductory section of the paper gives the characteristics of the population, as well as components of selected educational and training programs which seem to be successful.

The first sections are addressed to parents and professionals, including counselors, transition specialists, program directors, and others. Included are guidelines for recognizing the young person's strengths and weaknesses, and recommendations for teaching them skills necessary to live more independently. Another section, addressed to the young adult, can serve as a worksheet for discussion with parents or other advisers. The section on programs and resources outlines a variety of settings: some are residential or day programs; some are skills oriented; others are social and informal. A few programs with local appeal are described to encourage the development of such programs elsewhere. Final sections list employment information sources and selected publications. These lists can help families who choose to create their own individual approach to their son's or daughter's years after high school. Available funding from the U.S. Department of Education and from the Foundation for Children with Learning Disabilities (FCLD) to encourage the development of model transition programs is briefly described.

EC 308 587

## INTRODUCTION

A sizeable number of parents and professionals call HEATH to describe a group of young adults who have substantial learning disabilities and other special needs which make it difficult to plan for the period immediately after high school. Most of these young people have had individualized educational plans (IEP's) in high school. Some have been mainstreamed and have graduated with their age cohorts with special diplomas or certificates. Others have dropped out or entered training programs which did not lead to satisfactory skill development. Most have left the public school system by age 18, although services are available to them until age 21, or later in some states. They function far below grade level because they do not have the reading, writing, and math skills necessary to complete a college degree program, even if they are offered tutoring or instructional adaptations.

Many young people in this group are unable to enter a college, career school, or a full time job right after high school. They frequently stay at home well into their 20's, trying one short term job after another. Some spend many lonely hours at home with nothing to do. They are often depressed, and they tend to have no sense of what work might be meaningful for them or even how to search for employment. Too often, families do not know how to help them. A general poll of persons with disabilities taken by Louis Harris in 1986 estimates that two-thirds of this population are unemployed.

These young people seem several years younger than others of their age because of some characteristic behaviors. They have difficulty expressing themselves and understanding verbal, nonverbal, and written communications. They experience great difficulty in organizing possessions, plans, time, and thoughts. They tend to accumulate knowledge and learn the essential skills of daily living more slowly than their peers. They are inconsistent and somewhat unpredictable in their use of abilities and in their behavior. Even more than most young people, this young adult has goals far different from what is realistically possible. In general, they are immature for their age.

Parents and professionals believe that many of these characteristics may be attributed to substantial, language-based learning disabilities. In addition, other developmental immaturities in these young adults indicate that they need a much longer period of time to prepare for employment than do their age cohorts. They "fall between the cracks" of available postsecondary programming. On the one hand, they are not able to manage traditional college settings; adaptations such as special testing conditions and timing of assignments do not meet their needs. On the other hand, they clearly do not need the type of extensive, continuing, and constant support which is offered in programs for those with mental retardation.

**The group for whom this paper is written needs an intermediate level of support. These young adults need:**

- **individually prescribed, concrete, step-by-step teaching strategies in an educational or training setting;**
- **sensitive and encouraging acceptance in the workplace selected; and**

- **continuing, but not constant, supervision from family, friends, and other adults for a number of years.**

As mentioned above, these young adults frequently have long term goals of living and working independently, as do their siblings and peers. Professionals now believe that increasing independence is reasonable for this group if they can spend additional time in specially tailored programs or have family support to help them develop both skills and strategies for coping with life. That is, most should eventually be able to live independently from family in a supportive setting. They should be able to work competitively, and to enjoy a satisfying and useful adult life. With long term family encouragement, they can be increasingly independent and take their places in society.

Parents and advisers who call or write to HEATH Resource Center are searching for programs that will provide additional training in how to:

- make appropriate choices;
- develop a reasonable plan and follow through on it;
- improve ability to concentrate on instructions and complete assigned tasks;
- behave within the boundaries of social acceptability;
- develop and demonstrate positive self-concept;
- perceive and respond to social cues or nonverbal behavior;
- develop planning and goal setting strategies, which will develop foresight and judgment;
- reflect on their own strengths and weaknesses;
- express needs to the appropriate persons, as a self advocate;
- decide to ask for help in any of the above.

In order to accomplish these goals, the programs should teach social skills, study skills, entry level work skills, and specific job skills. The hope is that the young adult will then be more able to consider special programs in a community college or in vocational training, and be able to live semi-independently, as with a small group of friends.

## FOR PARENTS: PREPARING TO LET GO

Parents can do a great deal to help a son or daughter prepare for life after high school. Young people need encouragement, experience and exposure to new opportunities, and a great deal of support in order to mature to the point of becoming as self-sufficient and productive as possible. The challenge is to find or create a setting after high school that offers the young person a chance to develop his/her potential. The young adult considered here requires, even more than most people, to have strengths acknowledged. They need to have step-by-step instruction in how to perform some of life's essential tasks, and they need to be involved in planning their own activities. Wherever possible, parents should try to provide their sons or daughters responsibilities appropriate to their abilities so that their actions will be reinforced by their own success.

Professionals believe it is crucial for parents to have realistic expectations. Parents' goals for sons or daughters should be based on a clear understanding of the young person's capabilities in order to capitalize on positive motivation. It is important to guide choices toward successful experiences rather than activities which lead to disappointment or failure. This is especially difficult in families where parents and other siblings are high achievers who enjoy and expect high levels of academic, business, and social success.

Contrary to what many parents have been told, the way this young adult learns cannot be radically transformed or eliminated by training, although maturity will bring many abilities into focus. In other words, the patterns (which some call deficiencies) will not be entirely outgrown, but they are manageable. Program directors have found that parents sometimes expect that when a son or daughter has had success in a carefully structured and supportive environment, he or she might be able to do as well in a more traditional college/training program. This is not likely to be the case, they add.

Families go through developmental stages and processes just as individuals do, and sometimes it is difficult to continue to be supportive. It is tempting to think that once a program has been found, the path to independence is clear. Too often a new need arises requiring a different approach and additional flexibilty of thinking. Even more than most young people, this type of young adult will usually attempt many short term options before a satisfying niche is established.

### HOW CAN PARENTS HELP AT HOME?

Various aspects of daily living can be learned at home and will help contribute to later independence:

- Share cleaning, shopping, and meal preparation responsibilities to provide learning opportunities and the satisfaction of accomplishment.
- Help your son or daughter develop money management skills, such as budgeting and banking. Managing a weekly allowance or income from doing small jobs is part of preparation for managing income from a salary.
- Encourage your son or daughter to participate in leisure activities by assisting him/her to locate an appropriate club or class, or by starting such a group. Such groups offer opportunities for forming friendships, often particularly difficult for a young adult with substantial learning problems.
- Work along with your son or daughter in home or community tasks. Companionable modeling of how to do things encourages self-confidence and willingness to try independently.
- Expand the job options that your son/daughter could consider by discussing appropriate jobs in your workplace. Encourage questions and respond to concerns. If you know of places or people who would be understanding and augment skill development, try to enlist their help.

- Explore the possibility of having your son or daughter become a client of Vocational Rehabilitation (VR). Send for HEATH's resource paper about vocational rehabilitation services listed in the publications section below. Libraries or high school guidance offices may be able to help you locate the VR office nearest you, or look in the state listings of your local telephone book.
- Consider adult education courses as a part of an individualized program of activities and training. Your local school system will provide a catalogue of offerings.
- Consider making a written contract with your son or daughter which would appoint you, or another adult, to act as a coach. Having such a business-like arrangement allows the coach to make suggestions and the young person to ask for assistance in an orderly manner.
- Set up a daily routine, encourage him/her to follow it, and teach ways to compensate for scheduling problems.
- LISTEN to your young person and try to help him or her express ideas, make suggestions, and try new experiences and tasks.

Certain skills are invaluable in today's society. These will contribute significantly to getting and maintaining jobs and sustaining independence from family-based living. Some key skills are:

— Driving (Professionals urge that a teacher be chosen who knows how to capitalize on the student's style of learning.)
— Touch typing/word processing
— Using public transportation
— Choosing nutritious foods
— Making medical/dental/business appointments; remembering them, getting there on time, and returning
— Handling emergency situations

Above all, **let go!** It is difficult to know that your young adult will experience failure and make mistakes, and your instinct is to protect him/her from it. Parents who pull back and allow the process of growth and experimentation to occur find that young people can accept the lessons from life which they learn from false starts, even if the lessons are painful. They sometimes accept "the real world" more readily than having their parents tell them "what might happen." It is also true that you have to be willing to let go even when you receive overt or subtle criticism from the extended family and well-meaning friends.

Observers believe that appropriate jobs are available. To find the jobs and keep them, these young people need to be reassured, encouraged to ask for help when it's needed, and then allowed to try. In this population jobs are most often lost, not because the worker is lacking skills, but because he/she lacks awareness of acceptable social behaviors. Family and friends are essential as sources of modeling and providing cues in how to cope. They can offer optimism and applaud progress as experiences occur.

## FOR PROFESSIONALS AND PARENTS: PREPARING FOR TRAINING AND FOR EMPLOYMENT

Before choosing a postsecondary program, parents or advisers should assess which skills and needs are present and which must be emphasized in the next stage of the young adult's training. Among the various ways to distinguish are a **transition checklist, a vocational evaluation, and training on the job,** with observation of performance while in volunteer or part-time job trials. This group of young persons with substantial learning disabilities will need to try numerous programs and jobs, learning something from each. Parents and advisers will need to remain optimistic and flexible much longer than with other young adults embarking on postsecondary education or employment/careers.

### Transition Checklist

One approach parents, counselors, or transition specialists can take to assess personal skills is to use the Transition Checklist below, developed by The Federation for Children with Special Needs (312 Stuart Street, Boston, MA 02116, 617-482-2915).

**Transition Checklist**

Domestic Skills—Can he/she:

— prepare a breakfast, lunch, supper, snack, or pack a lunch
— clean own room
— do laundry: use washer, dryer, and iron
— budget time

Vocational Skills—Can he/she:

— get to/from work, on time
— punch/sign in appropriately
— perform work satisfactorily
— work cooperatively with co-workers
— take break/lunch appropriately
— wear suitable clothing
— use appropriate safety procedures
— follow directions
— accept supervision

Recreation/Leisure—Can he/she:

— use free time for pleasure
— choose reasonable activities
— pick a hobby
— perform required activities
— use community resources

Community Skills—Can he/she:

— use public transportation
— shop for groceries, clothing
— make necessary appointments
— use phone
— use bank accounts
— be safe in traffic, among strangers
— know how to seek help
— handle money

Social/Personal Skills—Can he/she:

— supply appropriate personal identification
— greet people appropriately
— use contemporary style of dress, hair, make-up
— use good grooming, hygiene skills
— "talk" with friends/co-workers
— be courteous
— be responsible
— be happy

A similar checklist is offered in **Unlocking Potential: College and Other Choices for Learning Disabled People: A Step-By-Step Guide,** a book which is included in the selected publications list at the end of this resource paper.

### Vocational Evaluation

Another approach is to get a professional vocational evaluation. When effectively administered and interpreted it provides constructive and positive feedback about the individual's vocational interests, abilities, and learning style. The evaluation should be a multidisciplinary one, involving a variety of professionals working together. The results of the separate tests should be coordinated and interpreted for the student by a psychologist or vocational counselor who is knowledgeable about young adults with substantial learning disabilities and other special needs.

Although there is a lack of consensus by professionals about how extensive and complete the assessment should be, the basic components of a vocational evaluation include:

- interview and behavioral observation; work samples, including "hands-on" activities using the same materials, tools, and tasks found in the real work setting;
- psychometric tests measuring an individual's aptitude, interests, dexterity, and academic achievement; and
- situational assessment, which simulates the actual work conditions to assess work behaviors.

There are a variety of ways to get a vocational evaluation. For the young adult out of school, the assessment can be done by a career counselor and/or the coordinator of disabled student services at the local community college, university, a vocational-technical school, or by a Vocational Rehabilitation counselor. These professionals can interview and assess (usually through paper and pencil tests) career interests, abilities, and strengths. In addition, there are numerous private nonprofit community based organizations (e.g. Goodwill Industries, Association for Retarded Citizens). There are also private sources (e.g. private rehabilitation certified vocational evaluators, and for-profit agencies) that provide assessment services to individuals with handicaps. Each state has a Special Needs Coordinator of the State Department of Education. This individual is responsible for vocational education services and programs for persons with disabilities and can provide information on sources of vocational evaluation.

### Training on the Job

A job trial and/or volunteer work in the actual field the young person chooses can include observations and reports of progress. These procedures are sometimes effective ways to determine whether the young person has potential to do a particular type of job. There are several reasons for this approach, rather than using testing instruments: frequently, a person with the kinds of special needs described in this paper does poorly in any sort of test situation; a task failed in the test may be successfully accomplished in a real work setting with the assistance and encouragement of fellow workers; and skills identified as necessary in tests for a given job may not actually be required in the specific job setting. So, for some people, the best preparation for working is doing it!

It is usually essential for parents and other interested adults to assist by developing a receptive climate in the chosen workplace. Clarify ahead of time who will supervise and coach the young person as situations develop. Thus, the significant adults involved can tailor a special "program" which does not require support from agencies and counselors in the formal sense by remaining available, attentive (without being overbearing), and flexible in the face of the difficulties that may arise.

### Computer Technology as Training in Home and Workplace

Although it is neither necessary nor always advisable, some families and professionals are finding that the microcomputer is a versatile tool which can be motivating for some students with learning disabilities. Software for those with vision impairment or for those who cannot write or calculate is proving helpful. For example, some skills such as typing and banking can be self-taught using computer programs.

The Resource Section of this paper lists HEATH's current memorandum, **Computers, Disability, and Postsecondary Education** which contains several sources of information that will help parents and counselors who wish to select hardware and software appropriate for the specific needs of these young adults.

* * *

## FOR THE YOUNG ADULT: PREPARING FOR INDEPENDENCE

[NOTE: This section is recommended for use as a basis of discussion between parents or the counselor and the young adult, rather than as a worksheet for the young person alone.]

You are probably looking forward to having your own money to spend, your own apartment or room with friends, and the chance to choose how to spend your free time. You know you'll need a job. To get one you will probably need some training. It is not too early to plan ahead.

In this section we are going ask questions such as, Are you ready for a job? Are you ready to live away from your family? How can you spend your spare time?

You can use this section to talk with your parents, an adult friend, or a counselor about selecting your next program.

### Are you ready for a job?

Whether you are still in high school or have been out of school a while, you can start by making a list of jobs you might like to do. What do you do well? What kind of work do you enjoy?

Here are some steps you can take to answer these questions:

- First: Find out as much as you can about yourself. Everyone has strong points as well as weaknesses. It will help you to know what yours are. For example, how do you learn something new? Is it easier when someone **shows** you how to do a task? Or, do you prefer a slow, careful explanation?
- Second: Find out as much as you can about the work world. Ask your parents or other adults about the different kinds of jobs that are done in their workplaces. How do employees learn their jobs? What kinds of rules must be followed?
- Third: Learn as many skills as you can at home. Many will help you in the workplace.
- Fourth: Decide if you need further training or experience, or both.
- Fifth: If you want more experience before looking for a full-time job, first look for a **part-time job** or volunteer work in your community. Hospitals, day care centers, and churches are examples of places looking for help. You could also try YMCA's, YWCA's, or Jewish Community Centers. Volunteering will help you find out what you like to do, what kind of places you enjoy working in, and what you are good at.
- Sixth: If you feel you are ready for a full-time job, discuss with your parents and other adults your ideas about what jobs would be interesting to you and reasonably located so you can manage transportation. Think about ways to make a good impression when interviewing for the job.
- Seventh: You can expect to get some training on the job. Your new boss might even ask you to take classes to improve certain skills before you begin.

**Do you have good work habits?**

There are some things that every employer expects a worker to be:

- **Regular in attendance:** It is important to be dependable and to show up for work every day. Others will be counting on you. If you cannot get to work, you must have a very good reason. Let your employer know you will be absent as soon as you can.
- **On time!** Your boss and fellow workers will be depending on you to be punctual and to show up as expected to do your job. If you are going to be late, you must have a very good reason. Call your boss right away.
- **A good team member:** People who work together need to cooperate. Employees should treat each other with respect. Like a family or group of friends, workers should consider one another's feelings and rights. Unfortunately, many people lose their jobs because they have never learned how to cooperate with others.
- **A "competitive" employee:** *After you have learned how to do the job,* you must do all the tasks listed in your job description. Here's what "competitive" means:
  - — You learn how to do a task without having to be shown again every time you need to repeat it, but . . .
  - — You ask for help when you are not really sure what to do.
  - — You get started on your own. You can tell when a task is finished and done well.
  - — You stay calm and continue working even when things seem tense in your workplace.
  - — You can take criticism that is meant to teach you, without getting upset, and learn from it.

In summary, you can begin planning to work by learning as much as possible about yourself and the work world. You can volunteer in your community. You can work at a part-time or full-time job. You can practice good work habits such as being dependable, punctual, working as a team player, and following the standards of a competitive worker.

**Are you ready to live away from your family?**

People who live away from family need to learn how to do some important things in order to take care of an apartment, shop and cook, pay bills, and have an enjoyable time with friends. You can begin to do some of these things, and it will help you later:

- Develop a budget. From money available to you, you will need to set aside a certain amount for rent, food, utilities, clothes, recreation, gifts, and savings. Consider opening a checking account and a savings account.
- Spend your money according to your planned budget; be sure you have enough left for necessary items.
- Pay bills promptly.
- Do home chores: plan meals, shop, cook, and serve. Make a schedule to remind yourself when to clean, do laundry, and do errands.
- Ask for help from parents or other adult friends. Work with them to learn hints on how to do these things more easily. Share good tips with others.

**What can you do in your spare time?**

People who live independently from family make their own decisions about how to spend spare time. Since you may eventually want to live with one or more friends, it is helpful to begin looking for people who share interests with you. You can make friends more easily if you are in a group learning and enjoying activities together. Here are some ideas:

- Social clubs, churches, synagogues, and community centers
- Creative and recreational activities, such as handcrafts, photography, painting, cooking, woodwork, excercise classes
- Sports, acting, or singing groups
- Volunteer jobs in community organizations

## POSTSECONDARY PROGRAMS FOR YOUNG ADULTS WITH LEARNING DISABILITIES AND OTHER SPECIAL NEEDS

**Please Note:** Persons with substantial learning disbilities sometimes have other disabilities as well. Some of the programs do and others do not encourage applicants with other conditions. For those whose primary condition is severe traumatic head injury, chronic psychiatric illness, or chemical dependency, these programs are probably not appropriate. However, they may be suited for some students who have sustained injury to the brain through disease, exposure to toxins, or other neurological conditions.

### Campus-Related Programs

These programs are based on a college campus, either in a separate center on a regular college campus or as a service to assist community students with college living skills. Some offer support while students take classes on a mainstreamed basis; others offer special classes and vocational training in separate settings for some or all aspects of the program.

**College Living Experience**
New Lifestyles, Inc.
5975 W. Sunrise Boulevard, Suite 211
Sunrise, FL 33313
(305) 797-6313
Ken Cuave, Director

A residential opportunity which helps students with special learning needs to complete college level coursework or vocational programming. Services include intensified tutorial assistance, instructor liaison, independent living skills instruction, and social skills training. Students attend **Broward Community College** or **McFatter Vocational School,** both nearby. Apartments are within walking distance of the campuses.

**In-Home Care**
**Hutchinson Technical College**
Two Century Avenue
Hutchinson, MN 55350
(612) 587-3636 (V/TDD)
Dick Lennes, Director

In-Home Care program is an example of postsecondary vocational training which incorporates students with learning disabilities into the regular program. Teaching is done on an individual basis and provides training in the areas of nursing assistant, home-health aide, transportantion assistance, preschool/day care aide, and in-home care of the young child. Curriculum materials are written at the 4-6th grade level and students participate in on-site work situations. Some students are clients of Vocational Rehabilitation. There are no dormitories available.

**Para-Educator Center for Young Adults (PEC)**
**New York University**
One Washington Place
New York, NY 10003
(212) 998-5800
Jane E. Herzog, Director

The Para-Educator Center (PEC) is a two-year program which trains students to be aides with preschoolers, infants and toddlers or the elderly. The program is geared to help students develop an awareness and knowledge of human development, acquire professional and vocational skills, and to prepare for independent living. Two residences serve more than half the students, and others commute from home.

**Professional Assistant Center for Education (PACE)**
**National-Louis University**
2840 Sheridan Road
Evanston, IL 60201
(708) 570-7200
Robert Harth, Director

PACE is a noncredit, nondegree, two year postsecondary program for learning disabled students. The program prepares young adults for careers as aides in preschools or human service agencies. In addition to professional preparation coursework, the curriculum also focuses on social skills and independent living skills. Students receive a certificate of completion at the conclusion of the program. College dormitory living is an integral part of the program.

**Single Step**
**Dundalk Community College**
7200 Sollers Point Road
Dundalk, MD 21222
(301) 285-9762
(301) 285-9693 (TDD)
Frank Pinter, Director

Single step is a continuing studies pre-vocational, transitional, academic/socialization program for adults with disabilities, including learning disabled. Students participate in two consecutive semesters of academic remediation, independent living skills training, and career development. Students attend three days per week, 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

Students range in age from 16 - 50, and they come from all over Maryland and out-of-state. Dormitories are not available.

**Strauss Kephart Institue (SKI)**
**Indian Hills Community College**
525 Grandview & N. Elm
Ottumwa, IA 52501
(515) 683-5125
Judy Brickey, Director

Indian Hills Community College offers a postsecondary education program for students with learning disabilities. The residential program is designed to meet special educational and developmental needs of high school granduates who wish to increase their educational achievement and vocational potential, but who, because of a specific learning disability, are unable or unready to cope with the demands of a traditional college program. Residental spaces are available in college dormitories.

**Threshold Program**
**Lesley College**
29 Everett Street
Cambridge, MA 02238
(617) 491-3739
Arlyn Roffman, Director

Threshold is a two-year, nondegree progam for young men and women, ages 18-26, who have substantial learning disabilities. The curriculum prepares students for careers as aides in the helping professions with young children, elderly people, or people with disabilities. In addition, students take a series of courses to improve their social, independent living, and leisure time skills. Campus dormitories are available. Upon graduation students receive a certificate of completion and six college credits in vocational studies. Most enroll in the **Threshold Transition Program,** a third year which offers on-the-job support and assistance to students in independent management of their own apartments as they venture into life in the Boston area.

**Transition Program**
**Middlesex Community College**
Terrace Hall Avenue
Burlington, MA 01803
(617) 272-7342 Ext. 3035
Karen Muncaster, Director

The Transition Program is a two-year, noncredit, certificate program for students who have learning disabilities or who learn slowly. The curriculum provides training in the vocational areas of clerical and business support, while also working on the development of independent living skills, personal-social skills, and job-seeking skills. Students apply their skills through internships in the clerical, mailroom, distributiton, or printing occupations. No on-campus housing is available.

**Vocational Independence Program (VIP)**
**New York Institute of Technology (NYIT)**
Independence Hall
Central Islip, NY 11722
(516) 348-3354
David Finkelstein, Director

VIP is a three-year, nondegree college program. Graduates receive a certificate diploma and eight nontransferable credits from NYIT. The program goals are to develop skills necessary for living an independent life; provide experience in a variety of selected jobs; and offer enjoyable social and recreational experiences of college life. VIP students are full-time students at NYIT with all privileges and opportunities (except for participation in NCAA varsity athletic teams). Majors offered include culinary arts, hospitality service, clerical, communciations, geriatrics, child care, and retail. Through career counseling and other professional support, emphasis is placed on developing skills to function effectively in the work environment and to maintain an independent life style. Dormitory space is available.

## Transitional Residential Programs

These programs usually last from one to three years. Participants may live in a dormitory or apartment and receive daily supervision to help them learn how to live in a group and how to manage life arrangements. Being employed or enrolled in a vocational training program is a part of such a program. Assistance is provided in securing vocational opportunities. The goals of transitional residential training programs are to instill a sense of responsibility and foster decision-making skills. The term "residential" sometimes refers to a program providing an option to live in a supervised dormitory setting. Sometimes the program also includes training in the personal skills necessary to live successfully in a group.

**Adult Living Internship**
Center for Unique Learners
5705 Arundel Avenue
Rockville, MD 20852
(301) 231-0115
Patricia Williams, Director

Adult Living Internship is an opportunity to make a supervised transition from living at home to living in the community. Students live in three-bedroom apartments, hold a job, and develop skills to live independently. Supportive counseling is available regarding their careers and self-esteem.

**Career Apprenticeship Progam (CAP)**
335 Oakland Road
Hyannis, MA 02601
(617) 778-1488
Fred Peck, Program Supervisor

The Career Apprenticeship Program is sponsored by Riverview School, Inc. Independent living skills are taught in a supportive, group home environment. Residents are employed at local businesses and receive training in a variety of areas. Students may stay up to three years.

**Career Development Center**
Apprenticeship Program
1933 Severn Grove Road
Annapolis, MD 21401
(301) 841-6438
Linda Jacobs, Director

The Center serves a small number of young adults requiring counseling to continue their training or education. They receive assessment, training, supervised apartment living, and guidance toward taking next steps.

**Center for Adaptive Learning**
3350 Clayton Road, Suite A
Concord, CA 94519
(415) 827-3863
Jean Styris, Director

Adults 18-40 years of age learn the essentials of independent living in a program that offers residential living and training in social skills, sensory motor training, counseling, roommate peer counseling, cognitive retraining, and job placement. Students either work or attend local community college, and job coaching and tutoring are available. Apartments in the community are available, and most are clients of Vocational Rehabilitation.

**Chapel Haven, Inc.**
1040 Whalley Avenue
New Haven, CT 06515
(203) 397-1714
Christine Gaynor, Director of Admissions

Chapel Haven offers participants a structured transitional residence designed to promote independent living skills and employment. Job samplings with local employers are utilized to link the practical academic and pre-vocational program with necessary job skills. Achievement of living skills and employment goals leads to an independent living situation in the New Haven community, with support services through the Outreach Program.

**Cloister Creek Educational Center, Inc.**
P.O. Box 80310
1280 Highway 138 SW
Conyers, GA 30208
(404) 483-0748
Debby Sinclair, Director

Cloister Creek is a nonprofit residential school designed to meet the special education needs of young adults age 17-22 whose learning difficulties have affected their abiility to function independently. In a family-style home, students work to improve basic academic, social, and independent living skills. Counseling in both groups and individual settings is provided, as well as pre-vocational and job rediness counseling. students are assisted to fnd jobs and are given the necessary support to make it a positive experience.

**Creative Community Services**
1720 Peachtree Road, Suite 127
Atlanta, GA 30309
(404) 872-6818
Sally Buchanan, Director

Serving young adults 20-35 years of age, this organization creates living arrangements for people with a range of learning disabilities who want to lead adult lifestyles but still need some support and assistance. CCS helps locate housing, provides a live-in counselor, if needed; helps develop a plan for each participant's future development; provides one-to-one training in necessary areas; and offers ongoing support for participants and their families.

**Foundation for Independent Living**
New Lifestyles, Inc.
5975 W. Sunrise Boulevard, Suite 211
Sunrise, FL 3313
(305) 797-6313
Ken Cuave, Director

Supervised independent apartment living is provided in a community complex conveniently located near shopping, movie theaters, and public transportation. Programming includes basic living skills training, job referral, and a complete schedule of social and recreation activities. Additional training in banking skills and other personalized programming is offered through individual contract with New Lifestyles (see College Living Experience, above).

**Independence Center**
3640 S. Sepulveda Boulevard, #102
Los Angeles, CA 90034
(213) 202-7102
Carol Goodman, Director

Independence Center provides a supportive program in which young adults with learning disabilities learn the skills necessary to live independently. These include job skills, apartment care, social skills, and adult decision-making. Vocational training is accomplished through apprenticeships, and/or enrollment in vocational schools or in community college programs.

**Jespy House**
65 Academy Street
South Orange, NJ 07079
(201) 762-6909
Lynn Kucher, Executive Director

Jespy House provides young adults with the opportunity to live in a supervised apartment setting and develop basic life skills, social skills, latent abilities, and independence. Residents are placed in the local job market upon arrival at the program, and supervision is provided by a vocational counselor.

**Life Development Institute**
P.O. Box 15112
Phoenix, AZ 85060
(602) ~~[illegible]~~ 254-0822
Robert Crawford, Director

The Life Development Institute conducts a variety of programs designed to enable participants to obtain employment and independent living status commensurate with individual capabilities. Vocational assessment and training is provided through community based programs or direct job placements. It is particularly appropriate for those needing a structured environment. The supervised residential component is an essential aspect of the postsecondary program.

**M.A.C.L.D. Apartment Residence/STILE Program**
(Success Through Independent Living Experiences)
1501 Park Avenue
Asbury Park, NJ 07712
(201) 774-4737
John Reno, Director

STILE is a transitional living facility sponsored by the Monmouth County Association for Children and Adults with Learning Disabilities. It provides experiential training to residents. Daily living, social, and vocational skills are developed through intensive instruction, counseling, and job placement. Productive independent living is the standard goal.

**Transitional Apartment Program**
18 Park Street
Lee, MA 01238
(413) 243-2576
Michael McManmon, Director

The Transitional Apartment Program is an independent living program for LD adults ages 18-30. The program offers full clinical services, vocational training, the opportunity to earn a GED or to on to college, and a residential program. The program also includes a major travel experience each year. Twelve apartments are available (singles and with roommates). Residents receive training in supervised apartments and participate in paid or voluntary job placements.

**Vista Program**
Captain Spencer Homestead
1356 Old Clinton Road
Westbrook, CT 06498
(203) 399-8080

Vista offers an individualized program for young adults in transition to work and independent living. Through work experiences, individual and group counseling, seminars and coursework students develop skills and behaviors necessary for success in adulthood. Among the skills addressed are interpersonal relationships, positive self-esteem, and time management. Upon completion of the program each student is assisted in the transition to an appropriate living situation, whether it is a supervised setting nearby or back to their home community.

## Selected Local Program Resources

The programs listed below are designed to serve a local community and do not provide residential accommodations unless so stated, although occasionally clients from other states find housing privately in order to attend. They are included here to show the variety of programming available.

**Center for Unique Learners**
5705 Arundel Avenue
Rockville, MD 20852
(301) 231-0115
Patricia Williams, Director

The Center's **Open Horizons Program** includes career counseling, job-placement with follow-up servoces, social and independent skills training, individual and group counseling, and academic instruction. Each student's program is individually designed.

Opening in 1991, the **Independence Center for Young Adults with Learning Disabilities** is a three year model demonstration project that will serve 75 individuals between the ages of 18 and 30 who have significant vocational and independent living handicaps due to the functional limitations imposed by their learning disabilities. Training will include self-advocacy, skills for accessessing local resources, acceptance of disability, assertion, social skills, job readiness/job seeking/job keeping skills, independent living, and disability awareness (how to disclose disability to an employer and ask for accommodations). Peer networking and job clubs, as well as family support meetings, will aid clients' transition to competitive employment and independent living. (Judy Kramer, Director; 301/468-8810)

**LEAP, Inc.**
(Life Experiences Activities Program)
8719 Colesville Road
Silver Spring, MD 20910
(301) 589-1777
Arlene Silverstein, Director

LEAP is a private, nonprofit rehabilitation agency which provides a transitional program to assist young adults with substantial learning disabilities and other special needs to become successfully integrated into the community. Services include assessment and diagnosis, vocational training, social awareness, counseling and therapy, vocational support services, and employer services. Some participants are clients of VR, and others are privately funded.

**Project A.B.L.E.**
(Alternatives for a Better Learning Experience)
Norwalk Board of Education Adult Education
105 Main Street
Norwalk, CT 06854
(203)847-0481
Patricia Giannini, Director

A.B.L.E. is an example of a program serving adults with learning disabilities through the public schools. Students attend classes two nights a week, for up to two years, and study business math, writing/spelling, and reading comprehension. The staff is trained in special education and provides informal counseling, socialization training, and a variety of supportive services, such as assistance in test taking and making requests for modifications in testing conditions of licensing exams. Twenty percent of the students go on to vocational school or a training program. Most combine the classes with daytime jobs.

**Specialized Housing, Inc.**
12 Lincoln Road
Brookline, MA 02146
(617) 277-1805
Margot and David Wizansky, Directors

Specialized Housing, Inc. sponsors five households in Massachusetts and Rhode Island, which are owned by parents and residents. Among the goals are to give young adults with disabilities a permanent place of their own, a sense of security, supervision on a 24-hour basis, and training as needed in housekeeping, money, social, and community skills. Ten

to twelve young adults with a range of disabilities, all work and participate in the life of the community. Specialized Housing, Inc. works with groups of families to design and organize the houses or apartments, as they choose.

**Springboard, Inc.**
Box 1342
West Concord, MA
(508) 369-1352
Alma Ring, Coordinator

The Springboad, Inc. provides social, educational recreational, and cultural activities for young adults with LD who are 18 years and older. The goals are to enhance social skills and to encourage the development of independent living skills. Professionals guide the regular meetings for participants, and there are occasional informational sessions for parents as well.

**The Lab School of Washington**
4759 Reservoir Road, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20007
(202) 965-6600, Ext. 2215
Neil Sturomski, Director of the Night School

Students commute from a wide area around Washington, DC to attend **The Night School** for adults 18 and over. It is a nondegree program offering courses in reading, grammar/writing, phonics/spelling, math, keyboarding, computers, and life management/job seeking skills. Other services include preparation for tests (such as the GED, SAT, GRE), training in study skills for college, individual tutoring, and career/college counselling.

In addition, The Lab School offers **The Career/College Program**, which focuses on career assessment and job-placement recommendations. It aims to help with lifetime productive employment for adults with learning disabilities by building on their assessed aptitudes, interests, and educational strengths, while working realistically with their disabilities. Evening group counselling sessions focus on job-seeking skills. College counselling is also available. (Lois Meyer, Director)

**Transition to Independence Program**
The Endependence Center of Northern Virginia
2111 Wilson Blvd., Suite 400
Arlington, VA 22201
(703) 525-3268 (V/TDD)
Elizabeth D'Alelio, Project Director

Transition to Independence Program is a teaching and support program for persons with learning disabilities or mild mental retardation. Among the services offered are independent living readiness evaluations, roommate referrals, and social events. Family education and support groups are also offered.

---

**Independent Living Centers**

ILCs are found all across the country. Many offer assistance similar to that described in the entry for the Endependence Center. Contact HEATH or the **ILRU** (Independent Living Research Utilization), which provides information and referral to the centers: ILRU, 3400 Bissonnet, Suite 101, Houston, TX 77005 713/666-6244.

## Vocational Rehabilitation Centers

All states have Rehabilitation and Training Centers (RTC). After a disability (including learning disability) is determined to be the barrier to employment, the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) may refer clients to such centers. The first step toward admission, then, is to phone or write the local VR office for an appointment. Consult the phone book under the state listings for Vocational Rehabilitation. Another source of state agency names and addresses is the National Rehabilitation Information Center (NARIC), 8455 Colesville Road, Suite 935, Silver Spring, MD 20910 (301) 588-9284; or (800) 346-2742.

The listings below are examples of RTCs, although the services differ from state to state.

**Hiram G. Andrews Center**
727 Goucher Street
Johnstown, PA 15905
(814) 255-5881
Joseph R. Rizzo, Director of Admissions

Hiram G. Andrews Center is a rehabilitation facility which serves clients with a wide range of disabilities and ages, on referral from the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (OVR) including some from other states. Training is offered in many fields; and there are associate degrees, diplomas, GEDs, and certificates offered in many fields. Comprehensive evaluation and placement services are offered.

**Human Resources Center**
Learning Disability Project
201 I.U. Willetts Road West
Albertson, Long Island, NY 11507-1599
(516) 747-5400
Craig Michaels, Coordinator

Along with the Learning Disability/Community College Program which provides a transition from high school into college, the Center offers vocational rehabilitation services for learning disabled young adults and their families, as well as for adults. Individuals who have been diagnosed by a professional as having a learning disability which may be a substantial handicap to employment may take advantage of: vocational assessment, skills training, counseling, remediation, placement assistance, and compensatory instruction. Client/students are generally referred by OVR.

**Woodrow Wilson Rehabilitation Center**
Virginia Department of Rehabilitative Services
Fishersville, VA 22939
(703) 332-7031
(800) 345-9972 (VA)
Robin Hawks, LD Program Director

The Center is a comprehensive residential rehabilitation facility offering vocational training, vocational evaluation, pre-vocational adjustment, independent living, and medical services to persons with disabilities, including learning disabilities. A comprehensive Learning Disabilities Assessment is provided. Learning style is identified and compensatory strategies are recommended. Treatment programs focus on building self-esteem, coping skills, and social skills. Individual counseling, speech, and audiology services are available.

## Employment and Placement Resources

**Job Training and Partnership (JTPA)**

Located in many cities throughout the country, information may be obtained by calling the State Office of Employment, listed in local phone books, and asking for procedures to get training.

**Mainstream's Project LINK**
1030 15th Street, NW, Suite 1010
Washington, DC 20005
(202) 898-0202
Patricia Jackson, National Director

**Mainstream's Project LINK**
717 N. Harwood, Suite 890
Dallas, TX 75201
(214) 969-0118
Joreen Sixtos, Regional Manager

**Projects With Industry**
Electronic Industries Foundation
1901 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 700
Washington, DC 20006
(202) 955-5815
Carol Dunlap, Project Director

Call or write for a listing of addresses and phone numbers in local areas. Projects are located in Los Angeles, Boston, Minneapolis, Chicago, Phoenix/Tucson, Philadelphia.

## Selected Publications

**GED Test Accommodations for Candidates with Specific Learning Disabilities.** (GED Testing Service, One Dupont Circle, Washington, DC 20036-1163; 202/ 939-9490)

HEATH Resource Center has available free by request the following resource papers or reprints:

- **Computers, Disability, and Postsecondary Education** (Jay Brill, 1989)
- **Education, Training, and Work Options after High School.** (Tracey Murray, 1990).
- **Getting Ready for College: Advising High School Students with Learning Disabilities.** (Carol Sullivan, revised by Ann Davie, 1990)
- **Information from HEATH.** (A newsletter three times a year.)
- **Resources for Adults with Learning Disabilities.** (Jay Brill, 1989)
- **After High School, What's Next? Planning with Students Who Have Substantial Learning Disabilities.** (Ann Davie, 1990)
- **Transition Plans, Teams, and Agreements.** (Lucy Trivelli, 1988)
- **Vocational Rehabilitation Services - A Postsecondary Consumer's Guide.** (Updated by Ann Davie, 1989)

**Making Choices, A Handbook for the Transition from School to Work for Learning Disabled Young Adults and Their Parents.** ($5, from Office of Sponsored Research, 96 Falmouth Street, Portland, ME 04103; 207/780-4871)

**The Forgotten Half: Pathways to Success for America's Youth and Working Families.** (single copy free) (The William T. Grant Commission on Work, Family, and Citizenship, Suite 301, 1001 Connecticut Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20036-5541)

**Transition Summaries (Numbers 4-7).** National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY), 1987-91. Available free.(NICHCY, P.O. Box 1492, Washington, DC 20013; 703/893-6061; 800/999-5599)

**Unlocking Potential: College and Other Choices for Learning Disabled People: A Step-By-Step Guide.** Barbara Scheiber and Jeanne Talpers, 1987. $12.95. (Woodbine House, 10400 Connecticut Avenue, Kensington, MD 20895; 800/843-7323)

---

**Updated 1991**. This resource paper was written in 1987 by Ann R. Davie, based on early research by Elizabeth Neault, Riverview School, Inc.

The paper was prepared under Cooperative Agreement No. H030C00001-90A with the U.S. Department of Education. The contract was awarded to the American Council on Education. The contents do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Government, nor does mention of products or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.

**About HEATH**

The HEATH Resource Center operates the national clearinghouse on postsecondary education for individuals with disabilities. The Center is supported by the United States Department of Education and is sponsored by the United States Department of Education and is sponsored by the American Council on Education. It collects and provides information about educational support services, policies, procedures, adaptations, and opportunities for people with disabilities which can be found on American campuses, vocational-technical schools, adult education programs, independent living centers, and other training entities after high school. The mission of HEATH is to expand the choices for people with disabilities as they seek to develop their full potential through postsecondary education and training.

**About Other Clearinghouses**

HEATH is one of several federally funded centers of information about education for children and youth with disabilities. They are part of the Recruitment and Information program authorized by Section 633 of Part D of the Education of the Handicapped Act, as amended.

The National Information Center for Children and Youth with Disabilities (NICHCY) handles concerns about younger persons with disability through secondary school. NICHCY, Box 1492, Washington, DC 20013 (703) 893-6061 (V/TDD); (703) 893-8614 (TDD only); (800) 999-5599 (voice only); SpecialNet ID: NICHCY.

The National Clearinghouse for Professions in Special Education encourages individuals seeking to assist those with disabilities by obtaining training in special education. Sponsored by NASDSE, 2021 K Street, NW, Suite 315, Washington, DC 20006. (202) 296-1800.

2M/3/91/65927R